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Seventh report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat

I. Introduction

1. In adopting its resolution 2253 (2015), the Security Council expressed its determination to address the threat posed to international peace and security by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) and associated individuals and groups. In paragraph 97 of the resolution, the Council requested that I provide an initial strategic-level report on the threat, followed by updates every four months. In its resolution 2368 (2017), the Council requested that I continue to provide, every six months, strategic-level reports that reflect the gravity of the aforementioned threat, as well as the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat.

2. This is my seventh report on the threat posed by ISIL to international peace and security.[1] The report was prepared by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team,[2] in close collaboration with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, other United Nations entities and international organizations.

3. The report points out that ISIL has continued to morph into a covert global network, with a weakened yet enduring core in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, regional affiliates in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, and the complex challenge posed by its returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their families. Member States and the United Nations have continued to strengthen, refine and promote the effective use of tools and measures to address the evolving transnational threat posed by ISIL.

[1] See S/2016/92, S/2016/501, S/2016/830, S/2017/97, S/2017/467 and S/2018/80.

[2] The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.

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II. Threat assessment

A. Overview of threat

4. By the end of 2017, ISIL had been defeated in Iraq and was in headlong retreat in the Syrian Arab Republic. In early 2018, the Syrian armed forces made further progress against ISIL around Damascus, but the group showed greater resilience in the east. The military momentum against ISIL increased again in the late spring.[3]

5. Many ISIL fighters, planners and senior figures have been killed, and many personnel have left the immediate conflict zone. Many, however, remain in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, some still fully engaged militarily and others concealed in sympathetic communities and urban areas. The current ISIL membership in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic is estimated at more than 20,000, split fairly evenly between the two countries. Among these is still a significant component of thousands of active foreign terrorist fighters.[4]

6. While the so-called "caliphate" has suffered attrition of its leadership and bureaucracy, and some delegation of authority has been unavoidable, collective discipline is intact. Abu Bakr al Baghdadi[5] remains in charge, although some reports suggest that he may have been injured. The general security and finance bureaux and the immigration and logistics coordination office of ISIL continue to function, as does its Amaq news outlet. Media activity slumped in September–October 2017, but has since recovered somewhat and stabilized. The balance of media activity has moved from the ISIL core to the affiliates. The group's propaganda remains weaker than it was up until mid-2017.[6]

7. The flow of foreign terrorist fighters towards ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic has essentially come to a halt. The reverse flow, although slower than anticipated, remains a serious challenge. ISIL relocators appear to be hiding wherever they can, with the intent to become active again when circumstances allow. The temporary stabilization of the group's military position in the east of the Syrian Arab Republic in early 2018 may have encouraged significant numbers of foreign terrorist fighters to remain in the conflict zone.[7]

8. There has been a decrease in the frequency of ISIL-directed terrorist attacks, which began late in 2017 and continued into 2018. There may be a causal connection between this and the military defeat of ISIL. The planned mergers of some bureaucratic units were not accomplished without disruption. Many of the most active terror-planners and operatives were killed in targeted strikes.[8]

9. The ISIL core is likely to survive in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic in the medium term owing to the ongoing conflict and complex stabilization challenges. Meanwhile, significant numbers of ISIL-affiliated fighters also exist in Afghanistan, South-East Asia, West Africa and Libya, and to a lesser extent in Sinai, Yemen, Somalia and the Sahel. The foreign terrorist fighter component of these varies and is largest in Afghanistan (see S/2018/466). There are also small cells in other countries and regions. The rising threat from this global network will be diverse and hard to

[3] Information provided by a Member State.
[4] Information provided by a Member State.
[5] Listed as Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai (QDi.299).
[6] Information provided by a Member State.
[7] Information provided by a Member State.
[8] Information provided by a Member State.

predict, and may even manifest itself if ISIL members leave the organization and join other networks.[9]

10. About a thousand foreign terrorist fighters are now detained in the north of the Syrian Arab Republic. Up to 10,000 are in the custody of the Government of Iraq (far more if their family members are counted). Some of the women and children who left the conflict zone and are now detained may have been victims of trafficking and sexual slavery at the hands of ISIL. Member States assess that trafficking in persons and sexual slavery have never been significant sources of income for ISIL, but they lack hard information on other aspects of the issue.

11. Archaeological sites in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic continue to be subject to illegal excavation and destruction since the competent authorities are unable to supervise all such locations.[10] ISIL likely generated funding by trafficking in cultural artefacts while at the peak of its territorial control, but it is difficult to assess whether it has stored such objects or is otherwise still able to profit from them.

12. ISIL can easily obtain arms and materiel in areas with weak governance where it is active. It excels in the manufacture of improvised explosive devices and in the weaponization of drones (see S/2018/14, para. 90). Member States assess that one of the dangers posed by returned foreign terrorist fighters is this kind of expertise garnered in conflict areas. Use of improvised explosive devices is likely to grow as ISIL further reverts to asymmetric tactics.

B. Regional trends

1. Middle East

13. ISIL is still evolving from a proto-State structure into a covert network. It no longer controls any significant urban centres, but for now has been able to hold on to territory in the eastern part of the Syrian province of Dayr al-Zawr, where it still dominates some small towns and villages. Its main concentration of fighters, including the remaining foreign terrorist fighters, is on the eastern side of the Middle Euphrates River Valley, and it holds strategically significant ground near the border with Iraq.[11] ISIL is still able to mount attacks inside Syrian territory. It does not fully control any territory in Iraq, but remains numerous and active.

14. ISIL has decentralized its leadership structure to mitigate further losses. Member States assess that many ISIL members intend to continue fighting despite the casualties they have suffered. Others are now hiding in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq and other countries in the region, representing a potential threat within those countries and beyond. Some have been arrested by Syrian government forces or detained by other armed entities engaged in fighting ISIL.

15. ISIL remains present in other parts of the Syrian Arab Republic, including in Aleppo.[12] The Rukban camp in the south of the country holds about 80,000 internally displaced persons, densely packed in a small geographical area. Some Member states expressed concern at a risk of radicalization and recruitment in the camp, where new ISIL cells could emerge. The ISIL-aligned Jaysh Khalid Ibn al-Waleed (QDe.155) is in Dar'a, in the far south-west.[13] On 25 July 2018, ISIL carried out multiple attacks, including suicide bombings, in civilian-populated areas in As Suwayda in the

[9] Information provided by a Member State.
[10] Information provided by a Member State.
[11] Information provided by a Member State.
[12] Information provided by a Member State.
[13] Information provided by a Member State.

south-west, reportedly killing and injuring more than 200 people and abducting women and children.

16. The finances of ISIL are harder to analyse now that its administrative functions have gone underground and it no longer attempts to administer people and territory. Its financial reserves have shrunk but not evaporated, and one Member State estimates them in the low hundreds of millions of United States dollars. By early 2018 ISIL had lost the ability to extract hydrocarbons (see S/2018/14/Rev.1, para. 9), but a decrease in the pace of military operations against it allowed it to regain access to some oil fields in the east of the Syrian Arab Republic.[14] As a result, oil remains a source of revenue for the group. It uses rudimentary methods to extract oil, both for its own consumption and for sale to locals. Other sources of revenue include extortion of oil distribution networks, "taxing" of commerce in areas it controls as well as contested areas, and kidnapping of local businessmen for relatively modest ransom payments in local currency.[15]

17. Despite the damage to the quasi-State bureaucratic structures of ISIL, systematic financial direction still emanates from its core leadership.[16] ISIL members have reportedly invested in the region and infiltrated businesses, such as construction companies, money exchanges[17] and agricultural, fisheries and real estate ventures, including hotels (see S/2018/14/Rev.1, paras. 12 and 13). There is concern about ISIL financial facilitators and networks moving their operations to nearby countries.[18]

18. ISIL is still able to channel funds across borders, often through intermediate countries, to their final destination. They rely primarily on hawala networks and money service businesses (some aware of the ISIL link, others not), as well as cash couriers.[19] Furthermore, the ISIL core appears to continue to support its affiliates financially, although the extent of this support is unclear and may be decreasing.[20]

19. In Yemen, sectarian polarization stimulated by the war with the Houthis attracted some recruits to ISIL. Member States report, however, that ISIL only commands 250 to 500 members in Yemen, who focus mainly on Yemeni and United Arab Emirates official targets. The group's violent extremist ideology and brutality do not appear to facilitate recruitment among the Yemeni population, and it is much weaker than Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

2. Africa

(a) North Africa

20. The ISIL presence in Libya persists in the form of cells around Tripoli, Misrata and Sabratah in the west, Ghat and Al Uwainat in the south and Ajdabiya and Darnah in the east. Estimates of ISIL numbers in the country vary between 3,000 and 4,000 individuals, strengthened by the movement of some foreign terrorist fighters from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Insecurity in Libya creates safe havens for terrorists, which in turn affect neighbouring countries. Foreign terrorist fighters of North African origin, especially, pose a wider threat in the region, increasing the operational capacity of local terrorist networks which they join, be they affiliated with ISIL or not.

[14] Information provided by a Member State.
[15] Information provided by a Member State.
[16] Information provided by a Member State.
[17] See, for example, the Narrative Summary of Reasons for Listing of Al-Kawthar Money Exchange (QDe.157).
[18] Information provided by a Member State.
[19] Information provided by a Member State.
[20] Information provided by a Member State.

21. It is reported that funding for these networks is derived from extortion of local populations, kidnapping for ransom and taxing of smuggling routes of all varieties. However, there is still no evidence that terrorists in North Africa are directly involved in trafficking of drugs or persons.[21]

22. ISIL elements are present in the mountainous areas in western Tunisia. In April 2018, the Tunisian Armed Forces eliminated several ISIL sleeper cells around Kasserine.[22] The ISIL-affiliated Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis is assessed by some Member States to have up to 1,000 fighters in North Sinai, Egypt. Military operations were launched against it in February 2018, and are ongoing.

23. ISIL continues publicly to threaten electoral processes in North Africa, but its only notable success has been its attack on the Libyan election commission in Tripoli in May 2018, in which 13 people died.[23]

(b) West Africa

24. The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) is mostly active at the Mali-Niger border.[24] ISGS has a lesser footprint than Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), the Al-Qaida-affiliated coalition of regional terrorist groups[25] that launched attacks and propaganda against French, United States of America and other international interests during the first half of 2018.[26] But ISGS shares the JNIM goal of destabilizing the Sahel and preventing the normalization of life so as to maintain freedom of movement in the north and access to smuggling routes.[27] Current pressure on ISGS, and the lack of support from the ISIL core, may generate closer cooperation with JNIM, but not a merger.[28] In Burkina Faso, one Ansarul Islam faction identifies with ISGS.[29]

25. Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) is much larger than ISGS and is the dominant group in the Lake Chad Basin. It kidnapped 111 schoolgirls from the Nigerian town of Dapchi on 18 February 2018 and released them on 21 March 2018 in exchange for a large ransom payment. Given its size and now its financial resources, ISWAP is assessed to pose the main ISIL threat in West Africa.[30]

(c) East Africa

26. The ISIL affiliate in Somalia remains weak, with limited resources and capabilities. Despite its current constraints, ISIL continues to pursue its strategic intent of expanding its presence in Somalia. A Member State noted that Abdikadir Mumin (not listed), the ISIL leader in Puntland, has been in discussion with local fighters regarding his intention to consolidate existing cells and win over local fighters. Member States assess that, despite the current difficulties facing ISIL, Somalia presents a conducive option for future operations.

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[21] Information provided by a Member State.
[22] Information provided by a Member State.
[23] Remarks of Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to the Security Council, 21 May 2018.
[24] Information provided by a Member State.
[25] The groups are in the coalition are Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (QDe.014), Ansar Eddine (QDe.135), Al Mourabitoun (QDe.141) and the Macina Liberation Front (see S/2018/14/Rev.1, para. 32).
[26] Information provided by a Member State.
[27] Information provided by a Member State.
[28] Information provided by a Member State.
[29] Information provided by a Member State.
[30] Information provided by a Member State.

27. The financing streams for ISIL in Somalia are limited, and its initial tactic of attacking and taking over supply points, including ports, is no longer feasible. The group has therefore turned to criminal activities such as robbery to supplement the limited support it receives from ISIL in Yemen in the form of cash, small arms and light weapons (see S/2018/14, para. 42).

28. Some Member States in the region reported movement of foreign terrorist fighters from their territories into Somalia, and relocators from other conflict zones attempting to transit their territories by exploiting the existing porous borders. Additionally, Member States reported that ISIL conducted recruitment and radicalization in East Africa mainly through its presence online.

3. Europe

29. Member State authorities in Europe remained concerned about the terrorist threat in early 2018, although the tempo of attacks and disrupted plots was lower than in 2017. Much terrorist activity involved individuals with criminal records but no serious prior security traces. The attacks tended to use cheap, unsophisticated methods, such as knives and vehicles, but were of high impact because they targeted crowded civilian areas. There was also increased use or attempted use of triacetone triperoxide explosives.[31]

30. ISIL continues to urge its supporters in Europe, through social media, to mount attacks in their country of residence. The 2018 FIFA World Cup became a focus for propaganda seeking to provoke attacks by lone individuals or small groups during the tournament. ISIL continues to disseminate various attack methodologies, as well as instructions for creating bombs and explosive vests. The recent trend has been away from directed and enabled attacks towards inspired attacks, an apparent result of the attrition of the group's external operations capabilities. Nevertheless, ISIL has recently manifested an interest in more sophisticated attacks, including ones using chemicals or remotely controlled improvised explosive devices.[32]

31. Member States noted that flows of returnees and relocators from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic had not materialized to the degree expected, but the vast majority of those who had successfully left the conflict zone had returned home rather than relocating elsewhere. Measures taken by Member States that had largely prevented further travel to Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic had created a different problem, with aspiring foreign terrorist fighters becoming "frustrated travellers". ISIL had thousands of such supporters who were active online and represented recruitment opportunities for terrorist networks. Despite the weakening of the ISIL core and the reduced quality of its propaganda, the high volume of commercially encrypted messages still had a significant enabling effect in the spheres of radicalization, recruitment and instruction.[33]

32. Radicalization in European prisons is a growing concern for the authorities. Meanwhile, some of those convicted years ago for terrorist offenses are now coming up for release, and some plots hatched in prison have already been foiled. On 29 May 2018, a radicalized inmate took the opportunity of temporary release to kill two police officers and a bystander in the Belgian city of Liège.[34]

33. Member States highlighted the complex challenge posed by female returnees from conflict zones. While many women were confined to the household and some were victims of sexual slavery, some actively participated in the recruitment of new

[31] Information provided by a Member State.
[32] Information provided by a Member State.
[33] Information provided by a Member State.
[34] Information provided by a Member State.

fighters on social media, some received weapons training and some took part in the fighting. Returning children posed an even more complex challenge for law enforcement and social services, and it was unclear what threat they might pose. The background and nationality of some children born in conflict zones are unclear. Many were exposed to violent extremist ideologies, some took part in propaganda videos and some were involved in fighting and violence.

4. Central and South Asia

34. In Afghanistan, ISIL continued attempts to expand its presence, despite pressure from the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, the international coalition and the Taliban. While the group's strongest presence is currently in the eastern provinces of Kunar and Nangarhar, it is also active in Jowzjan and other provinces in the north. It has reach into Kabul and more widely, and has committed disruptive, high-profile sectarian atrocities, as well as attacks against both Government and Taliban targets during the Eid al-Fitr ceasefire.[35]

35. As discussed in the ninth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team (see S/2018/466, sect. III), the numerical strength of ISIL in Afghanistan, and the nature of the external threat potentially emanating from its presence there, have been the subject of much discussion among Member States. There has not been any new consensus of Member State information to significantly alter the key judgments in that report, to the effect that ISIL has about 4,000 members in Afghanistan, including up to 1,000 in northern Afghanistan (with both numbers probably increasing steadily); that its leader in Afghanistan is Abu Sayed Bajauri (not listed) in Nangarhar; that most of its members and leaders were formerly members of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (QDe.132); and that it may represent a potential threat to the Member States of Central Asia.

36. According to one Member State, some recent plots detected and disrupted in Europe originated from ISIL in Afghanistan. Another Member State reported that ISIL in Afghanistan had been responsible for at least one attack in Kashmir. Apart from establishing presences across Afghanistan, ISIL maintains the objective of damaging the interests of other countries in the region.

37. The terrorist threat projecting from Afghanistan into Central Asia is perceived to be growing. Increasing numbers of foreign terrorist fighters are relocating from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic to Afghanistan, bringing with them skills in handling weaponry and improvised explosive devices and knowledge of military tactics. Some of them have connections with criminal groups. Central Asian fighters tend to feel most comfortable relocating among Afghans of Uzbek and Tajik ethnicity.[36]

5. South-East Asia

38. Indonesia was afflicted in May 2018 with a wave of deadly attacks. Members of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah,[37] an ISIL-linked local network of cells whose spiritual leader is Oman Rochman (QDi.407), took the unprecedented step of using their whole families in three operations.[38] On 13 May, a family of six, including a 9-year-old girl, carried out three suicide bombings against churches in Surabaya, while on 14 May a family of five set off two motorcycle bombs at the entrance to the local police headquarters in Surabaya, killing all of the bombers except for an 8-year-old girl.[39]

[35] Information provided by a Member State.
[36] Information provided by a Member State.
[37] See S/2018/14/Rev.1, para. 56 and S/2017/573, para. 62.
[38] Information provided by a Member State.
[39] Information provided by a Member State.

Another family of six was constructing bombs in nearby Sidoarjo on 13 May, when one bomb prematurely detonated and left two of the family members dead.[40] ISIL claimed responsibility for the successful attacks through its Amaq news outlet, but seems not to have played any direct role in them. However, it is understood that the three families were at least acquainted with one another.[41] Member States are concerned that ISIL may be adopting a new modus operandi of using families, including women[42] and children, as suicide bombers.

39. In the Philippines, in spite of losses suffered by ISIL-linked groups during the 2017 siege of Marawi City (see S/2018/14/Rev.1, paras. 58 and 59), the terrorist threat remains acute in Mindanao. Remnants of the network are reported to be regrouping, reactivating training camps and recruiting hundreds of followers from both inside and outside the Philippines.[43] Furthermore, the post-Marawi arrests of suspected foreign terrorist fighters who were not South-East Asian, some of whom travelled to the Philippines using stolen or false documents and/or broken travel routes, indicate that the southern Philippines continues to be a destination and transit point for foreign terrorist fighters from outside the region. The opportunity the area offers for militants to engage in combat, and the local availability of firearms, contribute to this phenomenon.[44]

40. The local ISIL affiliate, known as ISIL-Philippines or Daulah Islamiyah, includes several groups, among them the Basilan-based branch of the Abu Sayyaf Group (QDe.001).[45] However, following the death of Isnilon Totoni Hapilon (QDi.204) in Marawi, the affiliation of that group with ISIL is less clear, as many members have disassociated themselves from ISIL and concentrated more on criminal activities to raise funds, rather than on ideology.[46] As of July 2018, no replacement for Hapilon as the overall leader of ISIL in South-East Asia had been identified.[47]

41. Recent Member State designations have highlighted the role of intermediaries in the ISIL network in South-East Asia for financing, procurement of weapons and training, and also demonstrated connections among regional players, as well as between regional operatives and the ISIL core.[48] For example, intermediaries have facilitated financial transfers from the ISIL core to affiliates in the Philippines and arranged explosives and firearms training for Jamaah Ansharut Daulah recruits from Indonesia at camps in the Philippines. ISIL affiliates in the Philippines may still have access to the millions of dollars which they looted from banks and homes in Marawi.[49]

[40] Information provided by a Member State.
[41] Information provided by a Member State.
[42] Previously, would-be female suicide bombers had been arrested in Indonesia. See Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, "Mothers to bombers: the evolution of Indonesian women extremists", 31 January 2017.
[43] Information provided by a Member State.
[44] Information provided by a Member State.
[45] Information provided by a Member State.
[46] Information provided by a Member State.
[47] Information provided by a Member State.
[48] United States Department of the Treasury, "Treasury sanctions ISIS-Philippines facilitator for terror support", 30 April 2018; and "Treasury Sanctions ISIS facilitators across the globe," 9 February 2018.
[49] Information provided by a Member State.

III. Updates on responses to the evolving threat

A. Overview

42. Since my previous report (S/2018/80), the United Nations, Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations have continued to strengthen, refine and promote the effective use of tools and measures to address the evolving threat posed by ISIL, including its affiliates and supporters and returning or relocating foreign terrorist fighters.

43. The report I submitted to the General Assembly on 20 April 2018 in accordance with Assembly resolution 70/291 (A/72/840) provides a detailed account of the activities undertaken by the United Nations system from 2016 to early 2018 to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

44. Continued efforts have been made to strengthen the coherence, coordination and effectiveness of United Nations counter-terrorism efforts. On 23 February 2018, I signed the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact (see A/72/840, annex III) as an agreed framework with the heads of the United Nations entities, as well as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organization, to strengthen common action in the counter-terrorism work of the United Nations system.

45. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2395 (2017), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Office of Counter-Terrorism prepared a joint report affirming their close partnership in supporting Member States in their implementation of the international counter-terrorism framework and setting out practical steps to be taken to ensure the incorporation of the Executive Directorate's recommendations and analysis in the provision of technical assistance by the Office of Counter-Terrorism. The joint report was considered by the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee and the General Assembly (see S/2018/435 and A/72/840).

46. The Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Directorate have also strengthened their cooperation through joint high-level bilateral consultations in regions most affected by terrorism and violent extremism, aimed at enhancing the visibility of their activities and galvanizing support from technical assistance providers and donors.

47. On 6 and 7 March 2018, the heads of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Directorate conducted joint high-level bilateral consultations in Iraq, focusing on Iraq's progress in addressing the 16 priority capacity-building needs identified by the Counter-Terrorism Committee and endorsed by the Government of Iraq in 2015. A joint scoping mission, conducted from 1 to 3 May 2018, focused on specific capacity-building priorities.

48. From 29 April to 4 May 2018, the heads of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Directorate visited Central Asia to review progress made pursuant to the joint plan of action on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia and to explore potential areas of cooperation with Member States of the region in the plan's next phase. The Office of Counter-Terrorism will continue to cooperate closely with the Executive Directorate, including in follow-up to the Committee's assessment visit to all five States of Central Asia, to ensure that technical assistance delivery addresses the recommendations emerging from the visit and targets the priority needs of each State. The Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Directorate jointly briefed the Counter-Terrorism Committee on their joint visit to Central Asia.

49. United Nations counter-terrorism bodies have also continued to prioritize their response to the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon. In June 2018, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in consultation with the Executive Directorate and working through the Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, completed the latest update of the capacity-building implementation plan for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters in accordance with Security Council resolution 2396 (2017). The current implementation plan consists of 40 projects, to be implemented by 12 United Nations entities. Over 20 of the 40 projects focus specifically on returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.[50]

B. Countering the financing of terrorism

50. ISIL has continued to adapt its operational and financing methods. Its evolution from a territorial entity into a covert network has made the detection of funding flows more difficult. Consequently, there remains a need for Member States to strengthen their financial intelligence and their use of counter-financing of terrorism tools.

51. The heads of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate attended the international conference on combating the financing of Da'esh and Al-Qaida ("No Money for Terror") organized by the Presidency of France in Paris on 25 and 26 April 2018. The participants adopted a political road map for global counter-terrorism financing efforts in which they highlighted, inter alia, the need to provide greater support to States with identified strategic deficiencies in their implementation of counter-financing of terrorism standards, and acknowledged the role of the United Nations in that area.

52. In May 2018, the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) held a special session on countering the financing of terrorism, pursuant to a recommendation of the Executive Directorate. The session highlighted the challenges faced by GIABA member States in effectively implementing counter-financing of terrorism measures and the importance of conducting a regional terrorism-financing risk assessment. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Executive Directorate are working with GIABA to address this need.

53. There remains a significant risk that new technologies and payment modalities will be abused for terrorism-financing purposes, particularly as some new financial instruments remain unregulated in many Member States. Within the framework of the assessment visits of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Executive Directorate continued to discuss with host Governments the risks associated with new financial instruments, including the online collection of funds. From 28 to 30 April 2018, the Executive Directorate participated in the plenary meeting of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force and briefed the Operational Experts Forum on Terrorist Financing established by the Task Force on the use of information and communications technology.

54. The Executive Directorate has continued to promote the introduction and effective implementation of asset-freezing mechanisms pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). At the request of Tunisia, the Executive Directorate contributed to an expert workshop on mechanisms to freeze terrorist property and assets, organized by the European Union (within the framework of the counter-

[50] In accordance with resolution 2396 (2017), the updated version of the plan was communicated to Member States and relevant international, regional and subregional bodies. It is also available on the Network against Terrorism portal maintained by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, together with evaluation sheets for projects already completed under the plan.

terrorism in Middle East and North Africa countries project) and France. The Executive Directorate and the Office of Counter-Terrorism are now developing a joint initiative aimed at assisting Tunisia in the operationalization of its asset-freezing mechanism.

Organized crime

55. As highlighted by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 8 May 2018 (S/PRST/2018/9), the nexus between organized crime and terrorism remains a complex challenge. The Executive Directorate has devoted increasing attention to this nexus and to the potential involvement of terrorist groups in criminal activities to raise funds. Some visited States have noted a growing convergence between the funding activities of ISIL and those of organized criminal groups operating particularly in the Sahel and South-East Asia.

56. Acting in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2331 (2016) and 2388 (2017), the Executive Directorate has also enhanced its efforts to include the issue of trafficking in persons — where committed in support of terrorism, including for terrorism financing — in its dialogue with Member States, notably within the framework of assessment visits. In January 2018, the Executive Directorate joined the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, a policy forum mandated by the General Assembly to improve coordination among United Nations agencies and relevant international organizations to facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing and combating trafficking in persons.

57. In view of the complexity of the subject and the limited information currently available, the Executive Directorate is studying the nexus between terrorism and human trafficking. In April 2018 the Executive Directorate sent a questionnaire to all Member States, through their permanent missions in New York, soliciting information on the links between the two phenomena. I encourage Member States who have not yet done so to respond to the questionnaire.

58. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) continues to cooperate with international, regional and non-governmental organizations to strengthen the capacities of cultural heritage professionals and law enforcement authorities of conflict States and relevant concerned States to help prevent and counter the illicit trafficking of cultural property as a source of terrorism financing. This work includes initiatives to promote due diligence in art market transactions and the exchange of best practices in dealing with the exchange of cultural property, as well as the training of specialists in the fight against the looting of cultural artefacts and illicit trafficking in antiquities.

C. Border management and law enforcement

59. Security Council resolution 2396 (2017) introduced several new requirements for enhancing border security. Accordingly, the past six months have seen increased efforts to improve the use and responsible sharing of biometrics among relevant Member States, INTERPOL and other international bodies and to promote the introduction and implementation of passenger name records and advance passenger information systems.

60. The Executive Directorate has engaged systematically with Member States and international and regional organizations to assess the level of implementation of advance passenger information systems and to collect good practices in that regard. Thus far, 66 States have introduced measures requiring airlines to provide advance passenger information in accordance with the 2017 standard of the International Civil Aviation Organization on advance passenger information. However, few Member

States have the resources and capacity to effectively implement such systems. Further technical assistance will therefore be required to ensure wider usage of these technologies.

61. The Working Group on Border Management and Law Enforcement of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force has developed a compendium of recommended practices for the responsible use and sharing of biometrics in counter-terrorism.[51] The development of the compendium will be followed by a series of regional awareness-raising activities, funded by the Office of Counter-Terrorism in partnership with the Biometrics Institute, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, INTERPOL, UNODC and the private sector to support the efforts of Member States and regional organizations to use biometric data responsibly and in full compliance with international human rights law and standards.

62. Even though the continued development of advanced technologies to identify foreign terrorist fighters and other individuals linked to terrorism is encouraging, there remain many challenges, particularly with respect to the need to ensure that border-management strategies are comprehensive, human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive. These challenges have been significantly exacerbated by historic global forced displacement levels.[52]

63. From 11 to 13 June 2018, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights organized a regional workshop in South-East Asia as part of a training module for border-security officials on human rights in the context of counter-terrorism. Seven Member States participated in the workshop, which addressed several aspects of border security and management, including interception, immediate assistance, screening, interviewing, detention and return.

64. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking and sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated by terrorist groups. It is important that Member States step up their efforts in this area, including by developing and implementing gender-sensitive training for border-security and law enforcement officials, increasing the number of women in border and law enforcement agencies, ensuring that adequate personnel and facilities are in place to provide tailored responses for female victims of terrorism, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2331 (2016), and ensuring more effective identification of female foreign terrorist fighters.

65. There remains a lack of data on persons excluded from refugee status because of suspected links to terrorism and on measures taken subsequent to their exclusion. This lack of data may impede analysis of the effectiveness of measures taken in such situations. There is also a need for Member States to develop standard operating procedures for the lawful collection of information on such cases and the lawful sharing of information with third States, in full compliance with international laws and standards.

66. The protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks remains a priority concern, particularly considering continuing attacks perpetrated by ISIL and its supporters against vulnerable targets. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2341 (2017), initiatives have been developed to identify good practices in this area and enhance the delivery of assistance to Member States. The Working Group on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure including Vulnerable Targets, Internet and Tourism Security of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force

[51] Available at www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Compendium-biometrics-final-version-LATEST_18_JUNE_2018_optimized.pdf.

[52] See www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html.

published in June 2018 a compendium of good practices for the protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks.[53] The Executive Directorate has also engaged with the private sector on this issue, having notably co-chaired the related work of the World Economic Forum and promoted the need to protect critical infrastructure, both at the World Economic Forum and in the context of the work of the Asia information and communications technology counter-terrorism dialogue established by the Executive Directorate.

67. As noted in my previous report (see S/2018/80, para. 28), the continued dissemination of information through the Internet and social media on, inter alia, terror-attack methodologies and the construction of improvised explosive devices poses considerable challenges for law enforcement agencies. The use of improvised explosive devices by ISIL has caused death and injury to countless civilians and, as noted above (see para. 12), is likely to increase further. The United Nations is providing support to affected Member States in the area of mine action to mitigate the threat posed by improvised explosive devices. The United Nations Mine Action Service is currently assisting the Government of Iraq in rendering safe and removing such devices planted in the Old City of Mosul to facilitate recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

D. International judicial cooperation

68. Member States have continued to make progress in their efforts to strengthen international judicial cooperation. However, returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters continue to pose a significant challenge to criminal-justice systems. Prosecutors and investigators are increasingly required to handle complex cases that demand specialized knowledge of charity law, finance and information and communications technology, as well as an understanding of the range of special investigative techniques that are available, including when investigating and prosecuting sexual and gender-based violence, in full respect for the relevant international law and human rights obligations.

69. The Security Council requires Member States to strengthen their collection, handling, preservation and sharing of information and evidence (see Council resolution 2396 (2017), para. 20). In high-risk environments, such as conflict and post-conflict situations, civilian judicial and law enforcement practitioners often have limited capacity to conduct on-site investigations. Consequently, the military may play a critical role in the collection, preservation and lawful sharing of evidence. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, in cooperation with the members of the relevant working groups of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (The Hague), is developing United Nations guidelines that will include recommendations on ways to ensure that evidence collected by the military is admissible in court, including by ensuring chain of custody and full compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law.

70. A further pressing issue for prosecutors engaged in mutual legal assistance is the need to request digital evidence from communications service providers, who are required to put in place appropriate procedures and mechanisms to swiftly reply to mutual legal assistance requests from Member States. The Executive Directorate, UNODC and the International Association of Prosecutors have continued to develop a practical guide to requesting and gathering electronic evidence, including from private communications service providers, having held two expert groups meetings

[53] Available at www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Compendium-CIP-final-version-120618_new_fonts_18_june_2018_optimized.pdf.

in Vienna, in February and June 2018, and an outreach event for the private sector, in the Silicon Valley region of the United States, in July 2018.

71. Exchange of information and the use of technology and databases play a key role in preventing terrorism. However, the collection, analysis, storage and sharing of data must be conducted in a human rights-compliant manner, including provisions for destruction of the data. All stakeholders must also ensure effective protection of information contained in relevant databases. Those included in such databases should be persons with respect to whom there are reasonable grounds to suspect involvement in terrorism, as defined in the international counter-terrorism instruments and the relevant Security Council resolutions. The inclusion of persons for improper reasons, such as their engagement in non-violent political activity, harms the overall integrity of counter-terrorism databases and undermines international cooperation.

72. In an effort to facilitate closer judicial cooperation, UNODC and the Executive Directorate have been collaborating on a project to promote the designation of central authorities and encourage their sharing of good practices. In June 2018, UNODC launched a dedicated database of contact points of competent national authorities, which aims to facilitate contact and lawful information-sharing in this area.

73. The continued failure to prosecute in cases of sexual violence, including sexual slavery, perpetrated by terrorist groups remains a major shortcoming. My 2018 report on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2018/250) documents horrific acts of sexual violence perpetrated by terrorist groups and notes that, to date, not a single member of ISIL or Boko Haram has been prosecuted for offences of sexual violence. As emphasized in the report, there is an urgent need to develop national strategies for investigating and prosecuting sexual violence perpetrated by ISIL and its affiliates, which will require both political will and technical expertise.

74. Another challenging but critical area of cooperation relates to the intelligence services — both civilian and military — which can offer valuable insights into terrorist networks and groups, both on and off the battlefield. Intelligence services can play a crucial role in gathering evidence to prosecute terrorism-related crimes in instances where regular channels of judicial cooperation between criminal-justice actors no longer function, including within the framework of a conflict or other high-risk situation. Coordination and cooperation, through the establishment of fusion centres or through more informal cooperation mechanisms, can enhance understanding of the roles and needs of the intelligence and judicial communities. Robust oversight mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that such cooperation is in full compliance with human rights and rule-of-law standards.

E. Prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration

75. Foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members continued to return or relocate from conflict zones with various levels of experience. Member States have faced challenges in developing and implementing comprehensive risk assessments for such individuals and in taking appropriate action, including prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures that comply with domestic and international law and take into account gender and age sensitivities, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2396 (2017).

76. In view of the growing number of foreign terrorist fighters entering criminal-justice systems, the role of prisons in tackling this phenomenon remains crucial. In January 2018, UNODC, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Directorate launched a joint project on "Supporting the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons". The project aims to strengthen prison safety and security, improve capacity in assessing

the risks and needs of violent extremist prisoners, enhance capacity of prison-based disengagement, and strengthen social reintegration, whether in the post-release context or through the provision of alternatives to imprisonment. UNODC is also developing guidelines on non-custodial measures for terrorism offences, including for FTF returnees.

77. An emerging challenge in this area is addressing the risks and needs of foreign terrorist fighters exiting the prison system. The number of such individuals is expected to rise over the coming months and years. There is a risk that imprisonment may delay the threat posed by such individuals, not reduced it.[54] In its engagement with Member States, the Executive Directorate has identified concerns relating to the appropriateness of existing risk-assessment and monitoring tools for such individuals, as well as the need to ensure that effective measures for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society are provided outside the prison setting. Member States have been engaged in developing and refining such tools and programmes, but more work will be required to evaluate their impact and identify good practices.

78. Even though both men and women returnees face various forms of stigmatization and marginalization, returning women who are imprisoned experience higher rates of physical and sexual abuse while in detention and, when exiting prison, may face particular challenges due to lack of economic opportunities, strained family ties, and stigmatization. It is therefore important that States develop and implement tailored and gender-sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, both in and outside prison settings. Further efforts are required in this area.

79. Acting in accordance with resolution 2396 (2017), several States have introduced initiatives to provide rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for children associated with foreign terrorist fighters, in addition to adequate legal protections. However, some States have not yet adopted appropriate legal safeguards, norms or standards to protect and promote the human rights of children in such cases. Moreover, programmes aimed at preventing the recruitment and radicalization of children and at rehabilitating and reintegrating children are often limited in scope, duration and funding.

80. In June 2018, the Executive Directorate briefed the Counter-Terrorism Committee on its ongoing efforts to integrate the impact of terrorism on children and children's rights into its work, including in the context of country assessments. UNODC has published a handbook on children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups, which provides guidance for Member States on the role of the justice system in this context. UNODC is also implementing several technical assistance projects in this field.

81. The Office of Counter-Terrorism is developing a handbook to assist Member States in complying with international law, including human rights law and humanitarian law, in dealing with children accompanying or associated with individuals considered or suspected to be foreign terrorist fighters. An initial expert meeting was held in April 2018 in New York and a first regional consultative meeting will be held with Member States from South-East Asia in Jakarta on 30 and 31 July. The handbook will be finalized by the end of 2018 following two more consultative meetings.

Lake Chad Basin

82. UNODC and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate continued to support national initiatives in the Lake Chad Basin States aimed at strengthening criminal-justice responses to terrorism. From 27 February to 2 March

[54] https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CTED-Trends-Report-March-2018.pdf

2018, UNODC, the Executive Directorate and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a joint mission to Maiduguri, Nigeria, with the support of the Government of Nigeria and the European Union, to discuss the operationalization of the criminal justice action plan for north-east Nigeria adopted by the Government of Nigeria in December 2017. The discussions were complemented by a two-day inter-agency training workshop for the 20 members of the Joint Investigation Centre, which is responsible for the initial screening of persons associated with Boko Haram in Borno State.

83. In accordance with the requirements of Security Council resolutions 2349 (2017) and 2396 (2017), a regional conference on the screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of Boko Haram-associated persons in the Lake Chad Basin States was held in N'Djamena from 10 to 13 April 2018. The participants included representatives of the four Lake Chad Basin States, regional partners and United Nations entities, including the Executive Directorate and UNODC. During the conference, it was observed that differences in practices among Lake Chad Basin States could undermine the efficacy and sustainability of a regional approach. The conference reaffirmed the need for the Lake Chad Basin States to develop common elements and, where possible, common standards, in screening, prosecuting, rehabilitating and reintegrating persons associated with Boko Haram.

84. A regional workshop for the Lake Chad Basin countries on coherent approaches to the screening and prosecution of Boko Haram-associated persons was organized by the Executive Directorate and UNODC in N'Djamena from 17 to 19 July 2018 and provided input to the pillar on screening, prosecution rehabilitation and reintegration of the regional stabilization strategy for the Lake Chad Basin. The strategy, initiated by the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, is currently being finalized and is expected to be adopted in August 2018.

F. Countering terrorist narratives and engaging communities

85. United Nations entities have continued to support initiatives aimed at fostering a holistic, whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach to countering violent extremism. Within the framework of its engagement with States on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Executive Directorate has noted a growing commitment to an inclusive approach to countering violent extremism that seeks to engage vulnerable communities and is conducted in partnership with civil society groups, educators, counsellors and experts. Some Governments have actively facilitated the work of non-governmental actors in this context, including by providing funding, rather than handling initiatives directly. In continuing their engagement in this area, States should ensure appropriate monitoring of the human rights impact of measures to counter violent extremism, particularly on women, children and various religious, cultural and ethnic communities.

86. Concluding a series of community-engagement workshops held by the Executive Directorate for Member States of South and South-East Asia, the Counter-Terrorism Committee held an informal meeting on 6 June 2018 focusing on the need for a whole-of-society approach in countering terrorism and violent extremism. The meeting was attended by Member States of South and South-East Asia, as well as civil society organizations working on countering violent extremism that leads to terrorism.

87. On 29 May 2018, the Executive Directorate organized an open meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee to review developments in the area of countering terrorist narratives in accordance with Security Council resolution 2354 (2017). The participating experts — including representatives of Governments, academia,

religious institutes, civil society organizations and the private sector — stressed the importance of whole-of-society approaches to countering terrorist narratives. The meeting highlighted the need to develop critical thinking and digital literacy among potential target audiences of terrorist propaganda and to ensure that counter-narratives reflect an understanding of causes of alienation. Even though removal of terrorist content from online platforms can sometimes be appropriate, it cannot substitute for nuanced counter-narratives in the long term.

88. The Executive Directorate has also continued its engagement with the research community, particularly through its Global Research Network, to identify and assess issues, trends and developments relating to the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions. On 11 April 2018, the Executive Directorate launched a trends report on challenges posed by returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters, which draws primarily on the work of Network members.[55]

89. The full inclusion and empowerment of women is crucial to the success of programmes to prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism. On 10 and 11 April 2018, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, the Economic Community of West African States and the permanent secretariat of the Group of Five for the Sahel, with the support of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, co-hosted a high-level event on women, violence and terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel. The participants adopted the "Dakar Call for Action", in which they recommended that the States of West Africa and the Sahel take effective measures for the systematic involvement of women in all initiatives to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism, and that the international community and regional organizations provide substantial support for women's initiatives to address and prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism in the region.

90. On 18 July 2018, the Executive Directorate and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) held a joint symposium to discuss gender-sensitive research and data collection on the drivers of radicalization for women and the impacts of counter-terrorism strategies on women's human rights and women's organizations, with a view to developing targeted and evidence-based policy and programming responses, as requested by the Security Council in its resolutions 2242 (2015) and 2395 (2017).

91. Efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism must include young people. In April 2018, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, together with the permanent missions of Norway and Pakistan, organized a panel discussion on the topic "Investing in youth to counter terrorism". The participants considered ways in which private companies, civil society organizations and other non-governmental actors can contribute to efforts to counter violent extremism that is conducive to terrorism and develop alternative pathways for young people.

92. Based on its guides for prevention of violent extremism programmes in education, UNESCO has conducted regional capacity-building activities for educational stakeholders and youth in the Lake Chad Basin, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, as well as in South-East Europe and Central Asia. On 25 April 2018, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNESCO launched a joint project for the prevention of violent extremism through youth empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The project provides a framework for action to empower young women and men to be change-makers in their own communities and promote understanding, tolerance and peace in the Middle East and North Africa region.

93. United Nations entities have also engaged in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue with a view to preventing violent extremism and atrocity

[55] www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CTED-Trends-Report-March-2018.pdf.

crimes. The Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect continued to engage with religious leaders on preventing atrocity crimes, in particular in the context of the implementation of the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes.[56]

IV. Observations and recommendations

94. Despite the continued efforts of Member States to enhance implementation of a wide range of measures to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism, many challenges remain. Those challenges derive in particular from the ongoing transformation of ISIL from a territorial entity into a covert network, the activities of its regional affiliates and the threat posed by returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. They also derive from the growing sophistication and technological complexity of the required measures, as well as the associated need for expertise and costly resources. In this context, the continued capacity of the United Nations system to assess implementation gaps, identify good practices and deliver the necessary technical assistance to Member States continues to be crucial.

95. In this context, I am encouraged by the successful outcome of the first-ever counter-terrorism week, held at United Nations Headquarters from 25 to 29 June 2018, which confirmed the shared resolve of Member States in the face of terrorism and their readiness to engage within and strengthen the framework of the United Nations. On 26 June, the General Assembly, through its resolution 72/284, reaffirmed by consensus the comprehensive approach and four mutually reinforcing pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It also agreed on significant updates in light of the evolving threat of terrorism, including in the areas of addressing returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their families, countering the financing of terrorism, countering terrorist narratives and protecting critical infrastructure.

96. Immediately after the review of the strategy, I convened on 28 and 29 June the first-ever United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States. One hundred and fifty Member States responded to my call to explore ways to strengthen multilateral cooperation and build new partnerships to address practical and operational counter-terrorism issues, including in the fight against ISIL. There was broad agreement that more needs to be done to share expertise and critical counter-terrorism information. Member States also highlighted the benefits of adopting a comprehensive and inclusive whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to preventing and countering terrorism, including civil society and fully engaging women and youth.

97. Counter-terrorism continues to be one of my highest priorities and I am committed to building on the successes of counter-terrorism week. Many of the proposed activities emerging from the discussions that week would strengthen the ways in which the United Nations helps Member States to counter the threat posed by ISIL, such as the establishment of a network of global counter-terrorism coordinators, the establishment of platforms for the more efficient provision of capacity-building assistance and the real-time sharing of information, and the organization of thematic regional events on countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism.

[56] www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/Plan%20of%20Action_Religious_Prevent-Incite-WEB-rev3.pdf.